

Message Text

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15

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 BIB-01 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1120
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, CZ

SUBJECT: OUSTER OF TVORBA EDITOR

1. WE HAVE HEARD FROM SEVERAL SOURCES THAT JIRI HAJEK (NOT RPT NOT THE FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER) HAS BEEN REMOVED AS CHIEF EDITOR OF TVORBA, WEEKLY JOURNAL OF POLITICAL AND CULTURAL COMMENTARY. ALLEGED CAUSE OF OUSTER WAS ARTICLE HE WROTE IN ISSUE NO. 36 OF SEPT 1, 1976 ENTITLED "ON THE CZECHOSLOVAK CULTURAL CONTEXT". COPIES ALREADY DISTRIBUTED WERE RECALLED AND ENTIRE ISSUE ALLEGEDLY SUPPRESSED.

2. A QUICK READING OF THE ARTICLE SUGGESTS HAJEK OVERSTEPPED LIMITS OF NATIONAL CULTURAL LINE BY CRITICIZING WHAT HE CALLS "WEAKENING OF THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF A COMMON CZECHOSLOVAK CULTURAL CONTEXT." HE DEPLORES THAT, IN SPITE OF THE GREAT CLOSENESS OF THE CZECH AND SLOVAK LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CULTURES, THERE IS CURRENTLY NO SYSTEMATIC WAY FOR

CZECHS TO KEEP INFORMED OF SLOVAK CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS AND PROBLEMS AND VICE VERSA. WARMING TO HIS SUBJECT HAJEK CALLS FOR CONSIDERATION OF A CONCEPT OF "CZECHOSLOVAK SOCIALIST CULTURE" SIMILAR TO THAT OF "SOVIET SOCIALIST CULTURE". AT THE SAME TIME HE TRIES TO DISSOCIATE HIMSELF FROM THE "FALSE CONCEPT" OF "CZECHOSLOVAKISM" AND DENIES ANY KINSHIP BETWEEN HIS PROPOSAL AND THE ATTEMPTS OF "A. NOVOTNY" TO EFFECT A RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN CZECH AND SLOVAK CULTURES. APPARENTLY THESE PROTESTATIONS WERE NOT CONVINCING ENOUGH AND HAJEK IS OUT OF A JOB AND POSSIBLY IN DEEPER TROUBLE.

3. THAT HAJEK IS NO LONGER IN CHARGE OF TVORBA IS CONFIRMED BY SUBSEQUENT ISSUES, WHICH SHOW SENIOR OFFICIAL TO BE DEPUTY CHIEF EDITOR FRANTISEK OUREDNIK. WE ARE TOLD THAT HAJEK HAS BEEN IN TROUBLE WITH IDEOLOGICAL AUTHORITIES BEFORE AND IN RECENT PAST HAD TO MAKE PUBLIC APOLOGY FOR PRINTING ARTICLE BY HIS SON ATTACKING 1968 REFORMERS.

4. EMBASSY RECORDS INDICATE WE RECEIVED SUBSCRIPTION COPIES OF ISSUE NO. 36, WHICH ROUTINELY POUCHEO TO WASHINGTON. ARTICLE WILL BE TRANSLATED IN FULL AND COPIES POUCHEO TO EUR AND INR.

5. COMMENT: HAJEK'S ARTICLE HAD POTENTIAL FOR REKINDLING ISSUE WHICH PARTY LEADERSHIP WOULD PREFER TO SEE PERMANENTLY AT REST--THE SENSITIVE CZECH-SLOVAK NATIONALITY QUESTION. THE COMPLETE OFFICIAL SILENCE ON THE OUSTER OF HAJEK IN ITSELF APPEARS TO BE DESIGNED TO MINIMIZE PUBLIC REACTION AND LIMIT DAMAGE WHICH COULD BE CAUSED BY PUBLIC WASHING OF THIS PARTICULAR PIECE OF DIRTY LINEN. WHAT IS OF GREATEST INTEREST TO US IS HOW, IN A STATE CONSIDERED UNDER TIGHT IDEOLOGICAL CONTROL, SUCH AN ARTICLE MADE IT INTO PRINT AND ALMOST INTO CIRCULATION. EMBARRASSMENT CAUSED BY THIS CASE COULD HAVE REPERCUSSIONS REACHING QUITE HIGH IN THE PARTY.

BYRNE

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